



2/99 Summary of OPM Guidance on time flexibilities to allow Federal employees to volunteer by Greater Los Angeles Federal Executive Board

I. **Bargaining Unit Employees:** Conditions of employment, e.g., work schedules, may not be changed without notifying the exclusive representative & the bargaining unit. Current collective bargaining agreements govern the extent to which these employees may participate in the options mentioned below.

2. **Scheduling Work & Time Off:** While preserving effective work operations & productivity, Federal agencies are encouraged to maximize flexibilities to enable employees to volunteer.

a. **Alternative Work Schedules (AWS):** Compressed or flexible work schedules are encouraged if allowed by the agency's internal policies & practices & collective bargaining agreements.

b. **Credit Hours:** When an agency allows credit hours within a flexible work schedule, employees work hours in excess of their usual schedule which they may use later to take off time to volunteer. A maximum of 24 credit hours may be carried over from one pay period to the next.

c. **Annual Leave & Leave Without Pay:** Within agency policies & agreements, Federal managers are urged to be as accommodating as possible in approving requests for these types of leave from employees who wish to volunteer.

d. **Compensatory Time Off:** Employee requests to earn comp. time for regularly scheduled or occasional overtime may be approved to permit volunteering when the comp. time is later used.

e. **Excused Absence - Administrative Leave:** Discretion to excuse employees from their duties without loss of pay or charge to leave for volunteer activities may be used where not prohibited by law, policy, & agreements & when at least one of the following is satisfied: 1) the absence is directly related to the agency mission; 2) the absence is officially sponsored or sanctioned by the agency head; 3) the absence will be developmental for the employee's current job skills; 4) the absence is brief & in the interest of the agency

f. **Part-Time Employment & Job Sharing:** These arrangements may be appropriate for employees performing volunteer service.

3. **Coercion Prohibited:** Volunteer activities may be encouraged so long as managers do not interfere with employees' rights under flexible work schedules.
4. **Conflict of Interest & Hatch Act:** Conflict of interest laws & regulations governing outside employment apply to volunteer activities. Hatch Act restrictions apply to employees on paid or unpaid leave.
5. **Use of Government Facilities & Equipment:** Employees should consult ethics officials or General Counsel attorneys about what uses, if any, may be for an authorized purpose.
6. **Work-Related Injuries:** Employees performing mission-related, agency-sponsored/sanctioned or skills-enhancing volunteer activities while on excused absence are usually covered for Compensation for Work Injuries.
7. **Awards:** Volunteer recognition (citations, letters of appreciation, small mementos, newsletter stories) is strongly encouraged. Cash awards & paid time off undermine the volunteer spirit & are discouraged.
8. **Balance Mission & Volunteering:** OPM urges agencies to *BALANCE* support for employee volunteerism with the need to ensure work requirements are fulfilled & operations are conducted efficiently & effectively. Volunteer activities during duty hours are implemented at the discretion of the agency head.
9. **References:** For detailed information & legal citations, see the original OPM document at www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/1998/CPM98-V2.HTM or ask the FEB Volunteer Coordinator, Andrea Winkler, at FAX 213-576-3092 or E-Mail andrea.winkler@irs.gov for a copy.

